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## Violence Mars India's 72nd Republic Day Angry Farmers Storm Red Fort in Challenge to Modi

Farmer unions condemn event

By SHEIKH SAALIQ  
Associated Press

**N**EW DELHI — Tens of thousands of farmers marched, rode horses and drove tractors into India's capital Jan. 26, breaking through police barricades to storm the historic Red Fort — a deeply symbolic act that revealed the scale of their challenge to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government.

As the country celebrated Republic Day, the long-running protest turned violent, with farmers waving farm union and religious flags from the ramparts of the fort, where prime ministers annually hoist the national flag on the country's August independence holiday. Riot police fired tear gas and water cannons and set up barricades in an attempt to prevent the protesters from reaching the center of New Delhi, but the dem-



As the country celebrated Republic Day, the long-running protest turned violent, with farmers waving farm union and religious flags from the ramparts of the Red Fort. (ANI photo)

onstrators broke through in many places. (See separate story on the Republic Day parade.)

People watched in shock as the takeover of the fort, which was built in the 17th century and served as the palace of Mughal emperors, was shown live on hundreds of news channels. Protesters, some carrying ceremonial swords, ropes and sticks, overwhelmed police.

The farmers have been staging largely peaceful protests for nearly two months, demanding the withdrawal of new laws that they say will favor large corporate farms and devastate the earnings of smaller scale farmers.

The contentious legislation has exacerbated existing resentment among farmers, who have long been seen as the heart and soul of India but often complain of being ignored by the government. As their protest has gathered strength, it has rattled the government like never before since they form the most influential voting

[Cont. on page A20]

## Posthumous Padma Vibhushan for Narinder Kapany; Srikant Datar, Rattan Lal Among U.S. Padma Winners

India-West Staff Reporter

**T**he Indian Government on Jan. 25 announced that it was conferring the Padma Vibhushan award posthumously on Narinder Singh Kapany, who was widely known as the 'father of fiber optics.'

The Indian American scientist is among seven people named for the Padma Vibhushan award — the country's second highest civilian award — this year.

Two other Indian Americans are also among this year's Padma awardees. Srikant Datar and Rattan Lal will receive the Padma Shri award for their work in the field of literature and education, and science and engineering, respectively.

Kapany passed away in Woodside, Calif., on Dec. 3, 2020.

In 1953, working alongside Harold Hopkins at Imperial College



Late Indian American scientist and entrepreneur Dr. Narinder Singh Kapany, who founded Optics Technology Inc. in 1961, is among seven people named for the Padma Vibhushan award this year. (photo provided)



Indian American economist Srikant Datar was named for a Padma Shri Jan. 25. (Harvard Business School photo)

London, Kapany was the first to successfully transmit high quality images through fiber bundles. He coined the term "fiber optics" in a famous 1960 article for Scientific American.

Kapany founded Kaptron Inc. in 1973, which was later acquired by AMP Inc. In 1999, he was named one of seven "unsung heroes" in Fortune magazine's "Businessmen of the Century" issue.

Kapany wrote four books on fiber optics and entrepreneurship. His seminal research in fiber optics, lasers, and solar energy, and their applications in bio-medical instruments, defense, communications, and pollution-monitoring earned him more than 100 patents. (Read earlier India-West story here: <https://bit.ly/3iKvfNz>)

Datar was named as dean of Harvard Business School in October 2020 and he began his service Jan. 1.

[Cont. on page A18]

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